

**MEETING MINUTES  
BOARD OF SELECTMEN**

**JANUARY 20, 2015**

**TOWN OF ALSTEAD**

The Alstead Board of Selectmen met in open session on January 20<sup>th</sup>, 2015 at the Alstead Town Hall/Fire Station at 7:05 PM for the 2015 Annual Budget Hearing. Members present were Matthew D. Saxton and Joel C. McCarty. Approximately 50 residents including Department Heads, and Budget Committee members were in attendance. Selectmen Matt Saxton started the meeting by thanking everyone for coming and introducing Chris Rietman, Chair of the Alstead Budget Committee which formed in August. Chris introduced all the Budget Committee Members and explained to the audience what they had formed to do. They formed to inform the Alstead residents of what they thought were good amounts to be spending on the budget as well as warrant articles. They have not had enough time to look into everything but will be glad to give their opinions on what they have looked into.

Selectman Matt Saxton stated that they would go down the warrant articles one at a time and to ask questions after each one was read. The first article is to choose officers for the upcoming year. Number 2 is the operating budget (handouts with the breakdowns were handed out as well as the warrant articles and as MS636). The question for the Selectmen was why they had added to last year's budget. The answer was that some items had increased and a part time employee was going to be added to be trained for the Administrative Assistance job.

Article 3 was to buy a 2015 5500 Dodge pickup truck for the Highway Department. DPW Supervisor, David Crosby was there to answer questions. The stainless steel body was questioned. David explained that it was only \$3,500 more expensive and that they planned on being able to use the stainless body in the next truck. All the money will come from the Highway Capital Reserve Fund.

Article 4 is to establish a Capital Reserve Fund for the Transfer Station improvements and put \$5,000 in this fund. We are charging Langdon \$5,000 more as we will sometime need a new truck or a new used trash truck.

Article 5 is to pave North Road, the aprons on Old Settlers Road and part of Walpole Valley Road at a cost of \$130,000.

A discussion ensued about using fund balance to fund all the warrant articles. It was decided that fund balance would be used against all the articles.

Articles 6 through 10 were requesting money be put into the respective Capital Reserve Funds. The only one left out was for the bridges and that will be put in at \$25,000. The Police CRF asks for \$2,500, the Ambulance \$2,500, the Fire Dept. \$25,000, the Highway \$25,000, and Library \$15,000.

Article 11 was asking for \$3,000 to cut trees in the cemeteries. After discussion it was decided to increase that to \$5,000.

The next article was to stripe the roads for \$10,000. Opinions were exchanged. The next one asked for \$6,000 to inspect the Vilas Pool pedestrian bridge. Our insurance company had suggested that we have it inspected. The next article was to dredge in front of the gate of Vilas Dam for \$25,000 so that the gate could be opened. After discussion, it was decided to get a price on a steel cage from Taylor Welding to be put upstream in front of the gate to keep debris from clogging the gate up again. This cost would be added to the warrant article.

The next article was to lease a police cruiser and equipping it with lights, etc.

The next two articles were by petition. One of them was to close the Town Hall Capital Reserve Fund and the funds and interest would go into the town's general fund. The other article was to take \$65,941 from fund balance to put into the Bridge Capital Reserve Fund. Marge Noonan stated that the thought was that the money in the Town Hall Capital Reserve Fund would not be needed in the near future, but we have two bridges on the State red list that will have to be repaired soon. Some of the residents thought that the money could easily be used to fix up the present Town Hall.

Bruce Bellows was in the audience to explain the next article which would allow the investment company to take out their fees directly from the Capital Reserve invested funds instead of billing the Town approximately \$4,000 per year. There were mixed opinions on this article which were expressed.

The last three articles were on adopting Solar, Wind Powered, and Wood Heating Exemptions.

People began disassembling. Glenn Elsesser raised his hand and brought up that we had also talked about an article on a sidewalk to the Alstead Primary School, adding to the bridge fund, and Municipal Office retaining walls.

There being no further business before the Board, the Budget Hearing closed at 9:50 PM. The Board will reconvene in open session on Tuesday, January 27<sup>th</sup>, 2015 at 7:00 PM at the Municipal Offices.